

APPLYING THE BINET TEST TO BLIND CHILDREN.

The Survey
Oct 30, 1915.

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THE BLIND Superintendent of work for the blind in the public schools of Cleveland, Robert Irwin, is at work on a system for testing the mentality of blind children quite independently of the question of sight—a problem which has long puzzled him.

Following a summer vacation spent at the Institution for Feeble-minded at Vineland, N. J., a year ago, Mr. Irwin developed a tentative modification of the Binet-Simon series of mental tests. Obviously, all questions of visual concept had to be eliminated, and others, calling in the other senses, devised to take their place. This done, the new series had to be standardized for different ages, for a series of questions applicable to sighted children need not at all apply to the same ages in blind children, whose faculties develop at different rates.

In order to further such standardization, Mr. Irwin arranged during last year for tests not only in the Cleveland schools for the blind, but in Brooklyn, N. Y., Summit, N. J., Chicago, the West Pennsylvania Institute for the Blind in Pittsburgh, the Ohio State School for the Blind in Columbus, and the Montana School for the Blind. Dr. Drummond of Edinburgh, Scotland, adapted the system to English needs and undertook a series of tests. Finally, the Cincinnati Board of Education requested Mr. Irwin to organize its work for the blind after that of Cleveland; and a class for blind feeble-minded children, including the maximum number of five, now is in operation. Mr. Irwin says that so far as he knows, this is the first class of the kind in the country.

With the intimate experience of this class and the constant tests being made by those co-operating in the United States and Great Britain, Mr. Irwin hopes to be able to have a conclusive series of observations on hand by next June, and to be able to announce during the summer a new series of tests, on the Binet-Simon base, with which to grade accurately the mental age of any blind child.

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